

January 22, 2007

## **African Union Confirms Sudanese Bombings**

By Alfred de Montesquiou for The Associated Press

KHARTOUM, Sudan — The African Union confirmed Monday that Sudan's air force bombed Darfur villages last week, attacks that violated a cease-fire.

Rebel leaders in Darfur had reported that the government carried out air raids in northern Darfur, but the Sudanese military had denied the claim.

"Preliminary investigations by (the African Union) have confirmed that the aerial bombings indeed took place" against the village of Anka and in the region of Wadi Korma last week, said the African Union, which has peacekeepers in the war-ravaged zone.

The AU did not mention any casualties. But U.N. officials said it had reports of two dead.

The bombings, which breach U.N. Security Council resolutions and a peace agreement, came after the Sudanese government vowed to adhere to a new truce brokered by visiting New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson earlier this month.

The AU complained that the government bombed North Darfur "when efforts are being made to reenergize the peace process" by broadening support among rebels for the Darfur peace accord signed last May.

The United States and African Union are trying to get Darfur's fractious rebel groups to enter peace talks in a bid to end the continuous violence in the wartorn region of western Sudan. The government signed the peace deal with one insurgent leader, but other rebels refused and the AU says there are now at least a dozen rebel factions in Darfur.

More than 200,000 people have died and 2.5 million fled their homes in Darfur since 2003, when rebels took arms against the central government, accusing it of neglect.

Khartoum is accused of having responded with indiscriminate air raids against civilian villages, and by unleashing the janjaweed paramilitary groups blamed for the bulk of the conflict's atrocities.

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